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## Lahur Talabani's brothers, Polad and Ako accused of extortion: PUK media

Posted on August 3, 2021 by Editorial Staff in Politics

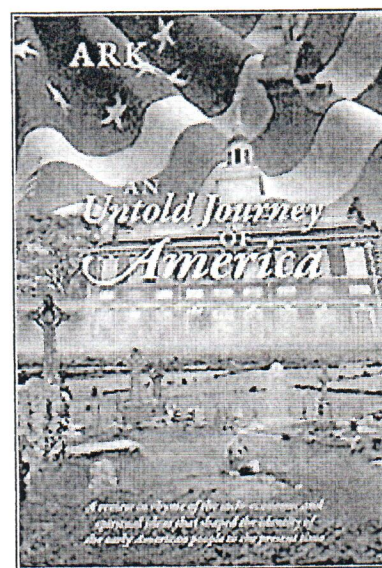


The cousins, Polad Sheikh Jangi Talabani (R) with Bafel Talabani (C) and Lahur Sheikh Jangi Talabani (L), Sulaimani, Iraqi Kurdistan, May 2021. Photo: Polad's FB

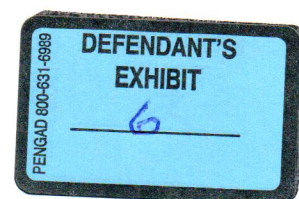
**SULAIMANI**, Iraqi Kurdistan region,— A media outlet affiliated with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) on Monday shared a video accusing the brothers of party co-president Lahur Sheikh Jangi Talabani of extortion, corruption, and theft. The video was published the same day Talabani announced he would go to court to resolve an internal PUK power struggle that saw him ousted from his post.

In the [video](#), a man identified as Bilind Ali Abdulrahman who works in the oil industry, accused Polad Sheikh Jangi of “kidnapping” him in 2015

Folkart Jangi Talabani



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in an attempt to force him and his family to hand over money and property to Lahur Talabani's other brother, Ako Sheikh Jangi.

The video was released a few hours after Lahur Talabani said that he has decided to take accusations against him to court after party was unable to form an investigative committee.

In July, rumours of a power struggle within the Sulaimani's ruling PUK were confirmed when Lahur's cousin and co-president Bafel Talabani changed his title "president", apparently ousting his cousin and co-leader Lahur Talabani. Bafel and his brother, Qubad Talabani, also changed the heads of the PUK's intelligence agency and counter-terrorism units, replacing officials who were close to Lahur Talabani with others loyal to Bafel.

Security forces loyal to Bafel in July also raided the offices of a TV channel affiliated with Lahur, iPLUS TV. The channel had not gone on air yet, but was scheduled to start broadcasting soon. Its studio has been handed over to Gali Kurdistan TV, an official PUK channel, and iPLUS offices was given to PUK media.

Bafel Talabani said a shakeup in the PUK was to end the abuse of party positions for personal gain, including "smuggling, extortion, threats, and spying."

On July 20, Lahur Talabani said that he had "temporarily" handed over power to his cousin on the condition a committee be formed "to investigate and follow up on all the baseless allegations and propaganda."

In his statement on Monday, Talabani said he will remain in Iraqi Kurdistan "until my last breath," despite apparent moves to force him abroad.

Polad Sheikh Jangi, one of the men accused in the video published by PUK media, was the head of the counter-terror unit who was replaced last month.

"I received a message on my phone. It was Polad Sheikh Jangi. He was my friend and I knew him ... He asked me where I was and I called him," Abdulrahman said in the video. He said he went to Polad's office where he claims he was locked inside, his phone was taken, and Polad said he owed them \$50 million.

Abdulrahman claimed he was held for 27 days and then taken to a deserted place with his hands tied, face covered, and Polad forced him to call his family and hand over assets to Ako Sheikh Jangi.

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A man identified as Bilind Ali Abdulrahman accused Polad Sheikh Jangi Talabani of "kidnapping" him in 2015 in an attempt to force him and his family to hand over money and property to Lahur Talabani's other brother, Ako Sheikh Jangi Talabani. August, 2021. Photo: Screengrab/PUK media video/FB

They took a concrete factory, a house, money and other properties, Abdulrahman claimed.

The cousins were elected as co-chairs of the PUK in February 2020, following years of wrangling within the party over who would succeed the late Jalal Talabani, who died in 2017.

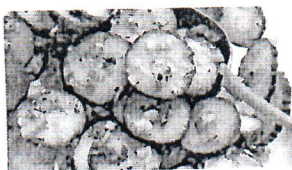
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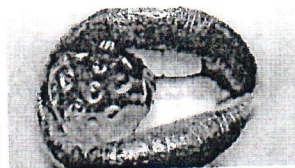
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